

REMARKS

Applicant hereby confirms the provisional election made without traverse to prosecute the invention of group I, claims 1-7, in this application.

In response to the Office Action, rejected claims 1 and 2 and withdrawn claim 8 have been canceled.

Reconsideration is requested of the rejection of claims 3-7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) because the combination of U.S. 5,252,801 Angel et al. in view of U.S. 4,825,031 Heideman fails to disclose or suggest the subject matter of claims 3-7.

The rejection depends upon the presence in Heideman of resilient members 18-20 connected between a support structure and associated arms "for the purpose of varying the resistance provided to the movement of each arm member towards its closed position". However, the members 18-20 of Heideman are not resilient members but hydraulic cushioning devices which, as the abstract indicates, provide resistance to the movement of the arm members toward their closed positions. These cushioning devices are similar to automotive shock absorbers, which merely resist motion on the part of the connected bodies but do not include the quality of resilience. Resilience causes or allows the members to spring back to their original positions when an external force is removed. Heideman's cushioning members merely resist motion.

On the other hand, Applicant's resilient members do not resist motion of the arms toward the closed position of the weld gun. Instead, the resilient members do not act until at least one of the electrodes of the weld gun reaches the work pieces to be welded. Then the resilient member or members yield to prevent the mechanism from moving the associated electrodes further against the workpiece, thereby preventing damage to the workpiece by excessive force exerted by the electrodes. When the actuator is reversed, the resilient members return to their original positions ready to absorb excessive motion upon the next actuation of the mechanism.

In view of the forgoing differences, between the structure and operation of the Heideman hydraulic cylinders and Applicant's resilient members, it is clear that the

combination of references fails to disclose the invention of claims 3-7. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of these claims as rewritten in independent form is respectfully requested.

This amendment is believed to be fully responsive to the issues raised in the Office Action and to place this case in condition for allowance. Favorable action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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